



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

ENVIRONMENT



31.07.09

COM (2009) 358 – Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Composite Report on the Conservation Status of Habitat Types and Species as required under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive

Under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, Member States must submit information on how the Directive is being implemented every six years. For the reporting period 2001 to 2006, Member States for the first time provided detailed assessments on the conservation status of each of the habitat types (216) and species (nearly 1 182) listed in the Directive and found within their territory. On the basis of the reports submitted by the Member States, the Commission is required to produce a composite report including an evaluation of the progress made and the contribution that the Natura 2000 network has made towards achieving the objectives set out in Article 3 of the Directive.

The findings demonstrate that the conservation measures in the Directive as well as funding and other instruments under sectoral policies can deliver positive results. Considerable work remains to be done to build on the progress achieved to date. In particular, the Natura 2000 network should be completed, individual sites may need restoration measures and individual sites and the network will need to be managed effectively and properly resourced.

The full composite report can be found here:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0358:FIN:EN:PDF>

European Commission and industry to invest € 3.2 billion in economic recovery for a Stronger, Greener and more Competitive Economy

On the 13th of July, the European Commission and industry announced the first round of research calls for proposals injecting €268million in three key market areas in order to trigger



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economic recovery and make it more sustainable and knowledge-based. A total of €3.2 billion has been earmarked for European public-private partnerships (PPPs) dedicated to develop new technologies in manufacturing, construction and the automotive sectors. These collaborations between the Commission and the industry will foster global competitiveness for European businesses, bring down the excessive energy consumption of Europe's buildings that make up one-third of EU CO₂ emissions, and develop new and sustainable forms of road transport. The three planned partnerships are part of the Commission's European Economy Recovery Plan endorsed by the European Council on December 2008 aiming to promote the convergence of public interest and industry commitment for research.

From 2010 to 2013, a total of € 3.2 billion will be allocated for research through the three public-private partnerships, with half of the funds coming from industry and half from the European Commission through the 7th Framework Programme for R&D. The first cross-thematic calls for proposals are part of three PPP:

- **Factories of the Future** (€ 1.2 billion) – An initiative to help EU manufacturers, especially small to medium businesses, adapt to global competitive pressures by increasing their knowledge and use of the technologies of the future.
- **Energy-efficient Buildings** (€ 1 billion) – An initiative to promote green technologies and development of energy-efficient systems and materials in European buildings.
- **Green Cars** (€ 1 billion) – An initiative emphasizing the development of renewable and non-polluting energy sources, safety and traffic fluidity in the automotive field. 'Greening' is necessary to achieve EU and world targets for emissions reductions.

For the full text of the European Economic Recovery Plan:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:08_00:FIN:EN:PDF

COM (2009) 400 - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Mainstreaming sustainable development into EU policies: 2009 Review of the European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development

The Sustainable Development Strategy of the European Union (EU SDS), as revised in 2006, is a framework for a long-term vision of sustainability in which economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection go hand in hand and are mutually supporting. The current



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economic and financial crisis has shown that sustainability is also a key factor for our financial systems and the economy as a whole. The crisis is affecting all sectors of the economy, households, businesses and jobs. The latest data show that EU labour markets continue to deteriorate in reaction to the economic crisis. Unemployment is rising, the number of job vacancies is still falling and companies continue to announce substantial job reductions across several sectors. The most vulnerable parts of the labour force are worst affected.

The Recovery Plan and the corresponding national plans already contain a number of initiatives in support of this objective. Work to overcome the crisis is ongoing, in particular in the context of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs, with a focus on green growth. In the short term, green measures help to revive the economy and create jobs. In the medium and long term, they also stimulate new technologies and reduce our impact on climate change, the depletion of natural resources and the degradation of ecosystems. The December 2007 European Council asked the Commission to provide a second progress report on the EU Sustainable Development Strategy by June 2009. This review is in response to the request of the European Council.

The Report can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/welcome/index_en.htm

The full communication can be found here:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0400:FIN:EN:PDF>

Europeans overwhelmingly consider the environmental impact of products they buy



In a Eurobarometer survey published on the 29th of August, it was revealed that four out of five Europeans say that they consider the environmental impact of the products they buy. Environmental consideration was highest in Greece where more than 9 in 10 of those surveyed said the impact of a product on the environment plays an important aspect in their purchasing decisions. In the same survey Europeans were evenly divided about claims by producers on the environmental performance of their products while nearly half thought that a combination of increased taxes on



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environmentally-damaging products and decreased taxes on environmentally-friendly products would best promote eco-friendly products. There was also strong support for retailers to play a role in promoting environmentally-friendly products and for mandatory carbon labelling.

EU Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas said that consumers have the power in the sense that the battle against climate change is not only the remit of companies and governments. Consumers also have their part to play. By purchasing environmentally and climate-friendly products, individual customers send the right signal to producers who respond in turn by producing more eco-friendly products.

Among other things the Eurobarometer survey shows Europeans' attitudes towards sustainable consumption and production and differing opinions on the claims by companies on the environmental performance of their products. Some 46% of EU citizens also thought that the best way to promote environmentally-friendly products would be to increase taxes on environmentally-damaging products and decrease taxes on environmentally-friendly products. Britons were most in favour of such a double taxation system while the Maltese much less so (28%) preferring instead reducing taxes on environmentally-friendly products only.

Background: EU Action Plan on sustainable consumption and production

In July 2008 the Commission presented an action plan which includes a series of proposals on sustainable consumption and production that will contribute to improve the environmental performance of products and increase the demand for more sustainable goods and production technologies. It also seeks to encourage EU industry to take advantage of opportunities to innovate. More information on this can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/escp_en.htm